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SURVEYS FLOOD-RELIEF, FLOOD-PREVENTION ACTIVITIES;  
KWANGSI WATER-CONSERVANCY PROJECT LEADERS CONFESS ERRORS

In mid-August a serious flood caused a washout between K'ai-yuan and T'ieh-ling on the main line between Mukden and Harbin, resulting in several days suspension of rail service and in inundation of some 100 rural villages and their agricultural lands. Relief measures were taken by the party, the government, and the military.

A picture of official irresponsibility and incompetence on the part of provincial officials of the people's government is presented by the confessions of two of the men in charge of a flood-prevention project near Nan-ning, Kwangsi, which collapsed as a result of mismanagement.

In contrast, Kwangtung claims to have achieved marked success in its 1951 flood-prevention efforts which included a large number of constructive projects.

GOVERNMENT RUSHES FLOOD RELIEF TO LIAOSI PROVINCE -- Peiping, Jen-min Jih-pao, 27 Aug 51

K'ai-yuan and T'ieh-ling hsien in Liaosi Province have been struck recently by a disastrous flood. A stretch of the Chung-Ch'ang Railway running through these hsien was inundated and destroyed. The Northeast People's government has already distributed emergency flood relief and the People's Air Force has dropped supplies to the stricken area.

K'ai-yuan and T'ieh-ling, situated in the mountains in the upper reaches of the Liao Ho, had previously seldom suffered from floods. From 0900, 13 September 1951, to 1300 the following day, 202 millimeters of rain fell in the vicinity of K'ai-yuan. This was 30 percent of the hsien's annual rainfall. This downpour caused a torrent in the mountains, and the waters of the Ch'ing Ho and the Ma-chung Ho, tributaries of the Liao, gathered turbulence and

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overflowed their banks, inundating a stretch of the Chung-Ch'ang Railway and 100 nearby rural villages. The flood water on either side of the Ch'ing Ho was over 10 meters deep. The region last experienced a flood of such severity 10 years ago. According to preliminary reports, the number of people affected was well over 10 000 and there is as yet no way of estimating loss of life and property.

After the flood hit, cadres from the hsien and special administrative region governments quickly came to the aid of the stricken populace. A detachment of the People's Liberation Army, garrisoned in the K'ai-yuan Hsien on the following day mustered over 50 boats and sped to the disaster area equipped with automobile inner tubes for use as life preservers. Hsien committees of the People's government and the Chinese Communist Party in neighboring Ch'ang-pei, Ch'ang-t'u, and Fa-k'u hsien sent cadres to take charge.

Kao Kang, chairman of the Northeast People's government, upon receiving the news, personally took charge. First, he sent a large flight of aircraft together with cadres who braved the perilous weather to reach the disaster zone and dropped vast quantities of food and life-saving equipment to the flood victims. Then he notified the hsien government of Hsin-min, Liao-chung, P'ar-shan, and T'ai-an to intensify flood precautions and to move the people in the threatened sectors to high ground.

Chinese and Soviet citizens sent two airplanes from Mukden to assist the People's Air Force in the relief work. Also, the Northeast People's government dispatched more than 300 rafts with complete crews from Ying-k'ou and other points. Most of the people in the disaster area are now out of danger. The homeless have been settled temporarily in the houses of fellow unfortunates. Lin Fang, vice-chairman of the Northeast People's government and Yang I-chen, chairman of the Liaosi People's government, personally visited the flood victims.

KWANGSI WATER CONSERVANCY PROJECT COLLAPSES -- Peiping, Jen-min Jih-pao, 27 Aug 51

(Chinese Editor's note: On 15 July 1951, this paper published a report on the washouts of the conservancy work near Nan-ning, Kwangsi. The following article presents the confessions of the men personally in charge of the projects.)

Confession Submitted by Lin Shan, Deputy Chief of the Kwangsi People's Government, Office of Agriculture and Forestry

The water-conservancy work on the Liang-feng Chiang, near Nan-ning, Kwangsi, was mismanaged, resulting in the loss of much property and funds. The results of this mismanagement has made an unfavorable impression on the people. I am the officer in charge of the water-conservancy work of the Office of Agriculture and Forestry, and as an active servant of the people and a member of the Communist Party, I do hereby request of the party and the government punishment commensurate with the seriousness of this gross negligence toward official duties.

The water-conservancy program for 1950 originally did not include the Liang-feng Chiang project. It was only after local bandit disorders had adversely affected the execution of the program that we decided to transfer some of the program's operational funds to the Liang-feng Chiang project. To meet the wishes of the people and mitigate the grave political effect

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of unemployment upon the people's government, we decided upon the construction of a conservancy project along the banks of the Liang-feng Chiang. In July 1950, surveying was begun. At that time, we requested advice and counsel from the Department of Water Conservancy, Central and South Regional District government, forwarding written communications and putting forth oral requests; but no clear and definite reply was forthcoming. Thus, it was not until the spring of 1951, when the work was nearly completed, that the Department ratified the plans for this project, without previous examination by the provincial Committee of Finance and Economics. The undertaking was poorly organized and unregulated from the start.

For over half a year after work was under way, I made no inspections of progress and accomplishments. In a report submitted at a committee conference, a few unimportant points were discussed and some of the problems connected with raw materials, cadres, people's workers and operational expenses were mentioned in a general fashion. But such weighty questions as engineering design and specifications, employment of labor force, organization of labor units, and indoctrination of cadres, were not fully considered or dealt with in a practical manner. During the course of the year, there were cadres who remarked that the project was not going well and that a strengthening of supervision and control was needed. At that time, however, having no cadres to convey and explain my instructions, I merely handed down some directions devised at random to rectify the situation, but I never did do all that was possible to restore organization and control. This was on my part a manifestation of ideological paralysis and languid irresponsibility.

By May 1951, the predicament became acute. I went out to inspect the dikes as required by standard operational procedures, and although I saw serious blunders and oversights, I revealed a bias in treating them as superficial. However, during the recent inspection tour of Comrade T'ao Chu, secretary of the Communist Provincial Committee, he went very thoroughly into all phases of the work. By comparison, I have been guilty of gross bureaucratic mistakes. How did this come about? Well, I frequently gave the excuse that I was too busy, or that the cadres were too few in number, and that I was inexperienced along this line. In point of fact, however, none of these excuses were valid. I am obliged to admit that I was using the operating techniques of (capitalist) business managers without distinguishing between the important and the unimportant, between the essential and the nonessential. I erred in handling the cadres, in failing to provide discriminating leadership, and what is more important, in lapsing into a political paralysis unworthy of the trust of the party and the people. Great loss followed from these defects and oversights. I therefore request of the party and the government adequate punishment. I will comply with their directives and will organize inspections which go below the surface of situations. I will increase and insure preventative measures. I will accept in all sincerity the reprimands of the party, and I am determined to correct my mistakes.

Confession submitted by Hu Pin, Supervisor in Charge of the Liang-feng Chiang Conservancy Work

After liberation, the Liang-feng Chiang Conservancy Project was carried on under the supervision and control of the Kwangsi People's government. The money spent on engineering and construction amounted to 5 billion yuan. The collapse of this project is an indication that we who were in charge were negligent with an enterprise of the people. Having been the cause of this disastrous occurrence, I should bear the brunt of the responsibility for it. As supervisor in charge of the project, and as a member of the Communist Party, I sincerely and humbly accept the criticism of the party and submit the following confession.

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Our preparation was inadequate. The location of the embankments and of the drainage canals had to be changed five or six times due to inadequate preliminary investigation of the soil textures and rock formations, and to the lack of foresight in planning the whole project. Inaccurate estimates of quantities led to waste of labor and funds. Tools and equipment for the job were insufficient and unsuited for the job. For instance, the embankments were not properly tamped, and this was the chief reason for the washouts of the protective and diversionary dikes and embankments. We viewed the project as a simple task to be completed hurriedly with as little trouble as possible. Our ideological indoctrination of the people's workers was neglected, so that their enthusiasm was low and their work was remiss. We did not succeed in getting good teamwork among the engineers and cadres; an attitude was engendered which is expressed in the adage, "Let each sweep the snow from his own door and pay no attention to the frost on other people's roofs." This psychology of uncoordinated responsibility led to slipshod work and defective construction.

There were no thorough-going work inspections. When problems arose, often the time for solution was already past, and not understanding the technical aspects of the work. I tried to avoid the responsibility for dealing with them. At times, I erred taking an unreasonable and undemocratic attitude, ignoring constructive suggestions by comrades, and peremptorily ordering the work to be carried out exactly as called for by the original plans. At other times, I erred by merely instructing a few foremen to work out with the local people whatever solution seemed practical to them regardless of the original plans.

For example, with reference to work on the section opposite the hamlet of Ssu-hsia, it was pointed out that the amount of earthwork called for by the plans was greater than necessary. I gave the matter no consideration. Later, it was found by actual measurement that more than 2,000 fang of earthwork could have been saved. Again, when weathered septarium was encountered, several comrades suggested that certain drainage ditches be moved outward. I neither accepted the idea nor had it considered by the engineers. The result was that landslides occurred. This is the manner in which I received the suggestions of the workers and of the party cadres.

Thus cadre morale declined; periodical reports were not made on time and when made mentioned accomplishments only, not reporting shortcomings and defects; explanation of blunders and delays were not made. Hence the higher authorities were uninformed or misinformed regarding the true situation and were unable to deal with it properly before it was too late.

The above-mentioned grievous errors clearly manifest an attitude of bureaucratic irresponsibility toward a project of the people. Therefore, I accept the criticism of the party authorities and request of the party and of the government suitable punishment.

KWANGTUNG CHECKS FLOODS DURING 1951 -- Canton, Nan-fang, Jih-pao, 1 Oct 51

During 1951, flood-control operations in Kwangtung have achieved marked success. The flood season passed without serious incident and by the end of September, the tasks assigned flood-prevention authorities had been completed successfully. The close integration and cooperation of party and government, army and people, coupled with the noble efforts of the water-conservation labor corps were all responsible for the results.

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In 1951, The General Office of the Chu Chiang Water Conservancy, and the Kwangtung Agricultural and Forestry Department, Office of Water Conservancy, both following the national water-conservation and construction policy, and acting according to the actual conditions prevailing in the Kwangtung countryside, stressed the importance of flood control, unified drainage networks, increased work on dike maintenance and restoration of flood-gates, and improved the province-wide disposition of the labor force engaged in banking and tamping dike walls. At the same time, the movement to make each village a small flood-control station was set in motion with instructions to prevent breaks in dikes and to prevent high flood levels from becoming disasters. In the course of the year, more than 1.1 million people were engaged in flood-control operations in Kwangtung.

Under adverse conditions where time was short, assign quotas urgent, and the labor force small, the participating people's workers and cadres rushed the work day and night, never complaining of labor fatigue and displaying the lofty spirit of "acting in the service of the people." As a result, they were above their assigned quotas in completing their work. According to incomplete data, from January to August the total volume of repaired dikes was 15,192,026 cubic meters, including those areas which operated independently, and the total number of floodgates built was 43. The amount of work already done on the dikes and the number of floodgates constructed greatly exceeds corresponding activity during the 30 years of Kuomintang control. (Only 19 floodgates were put up during the 30 years of reactionary control.) In addition, 30,714 small-scale water-conservation projects were completed.

The above-mentioned engineering achievements not only represent a great quantitative increase, but also a qualitative one which proved of great benefit in the 1951 flood-control program. An estimated 8,136,738 mou of farm land was saved and, assigning an average yield of 150 catties of rice per mou, the total amount of rice saved may be put at 12,205,107 piculs. Considering that on an average each person consumes one catty of rice per day, the rice saved could feed Kwangtung's entire 30 million population for 40 days. Also, taking the present value of a picul of rice at 110,000 yuan, the total value of the rice would then be the equivalent of 1,342,561,770,000 yuan. For 1951, this represents a great harvest on the part of the people of Kwangtung.

The noteworthy results achieved in Kwangtung in the battle against floods stemmed from the ability and technique of the high command in the Communist Party and in the provincial people's government. However, since the 1951 rainy season in Kwangtung was exceptionally heavy and early, keeping the rivers at flood level from the beginning of April, and since the repair and increased construction of flood control works had not yet been completed, a great flood struck. Under these adverse conditions, the Kwangtung People's government first mobilized the people and worked to finish the spring reconstruction project, and then convened a Flood-Prevention Conference to arrange for widely distributed flood-control operations. The Central and South Office of the Chinese Communist Party, the South China Military Administrative Committee, and the Kwangtung People's government issued a joint directive on flood control and established a flood-control apparatus on all levels, so that training for flood emergencies could be undertaken and equipment for flood-control corps could be supplied. The top official in each of the rural areas personally inspected his area's dikes, and the masses, on their own initiative, organized integrated patrols. The General Office of the Chu Chiang Water Conservancy set up 20 flood-alarm stations, increased the telegraph hookups, and made further preparation for advance warning of the disposition of the flood waters.

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On 20 April 1951, Ch'ing-hsi-wei, the dike-protected area of Ch'ing-yuan Hsien was the scene of the worst flood in 20 years. Seven breaks in the dikes, were detected. At the command of the people's government and the party, 8,000 soldiers were hastily assembled; and struggling night and day, they dammed the breaks, slowed the progress of the flood waters, and eventually enabled farmers to replant their early rice paddies. Furthermore, the yield of the fields was more than doubled because of the previous construction of floodgates. About the same time, an alarm was sounded in the Ku-ch'eng area. More than 800 citizens were mustered to work during the night with over 200 locally garrisoned soldiers. By driving wooden pilings to contain the waters the danger was averted.

Concerning the safety of the lives and property of the people of Canton and the populace of the northern suburbs of the metropolis, it can be reported that in the Shih-chiao-wei dike-protected area alone, 27 danger points were detected. Acting upon orders from the people's government and the Communist Party, more than 30,000 local citizens and more than 200 volunteers from Hua Hsien came to the rescue. They included workers, teachers, students, doctors, and businessmen. The administrative officer of the Pei Chiang area and the mayor of Ch'ing-yuan personally supervised the work on the dikes. The General Office of the Chu Chiang Water Conservancy sent an advisory body and a group of technicians to set up a flood-control command post at Shih-chiao. During the night they transferred 75,000 straw sacks from the Hsi Chiang area and, after 4 days and nights of strenuous effort, the area was finally out of danger.

Also, there were 15 danger points along the downstream districts of Yung-an and Lan-kang, two of the ten districts in San-shui Hsien. Over 48,000 citizens fought for 4 or 5 nights before containing the flood. The lives and property of many citizens over a wide area of land were thereby saved.

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